THE COMMONWEAL

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GOLDEN WEEKS

VACATION time does not begin with the Fourth of July. But on or about the birthday of the nation the exodus from city to country acquires a tempo that forces it on the attention of the most inattentive. Trains running in sections and with crowded aisles, battalions of boy scouts assembled by bugle call in the concourses of our great stations, packed highways and speedways where the margin of safety, always slim, grows appreciably slimmer, and their resultant in a mounting toll of mishaps, continue to be the heralds of the holiday season year in and year out, and all that special writers who make it the subject of articles in the press are able to register is an intensification of the process as time goes on. Building experts tell us that rhythmical movements put the maximum strain upon the soundness of any structure. The American vacation is essentially a rhythmical affair. Foresight and hard work on the part of traffic managers and traffic controllers manage to accommodate it to a quite wonderful extent. But no system that man has ever thought out can take the initial strain out of the situation that arises when common impulse and common opportunity send thousands of human beings swarming through outlets designed for hundreds. The prelude to a period devised for relaxation is forced to be nerve-racking concentration.

Naturally, tyranny has produced its rebels. There are, first of all, the happy mortals who can arrange work and leisure upon a schedule that takes no note of public holidays or "dead seasons." In paragraphs and columns these privileged ones, a large proportion of whom seem to be writers, love to feature the peace that descends upon the unsocial being who can watch his harassed fellows converging upon packed railroad stations with an impersonal interest, and return to a quiet city apartment to dream or do his work with the heartening prospect before his mind's eye of a vacation taken out of season. There is also the growing group of those who believe or affect to believe that the statutory fortnight of complete separation from business is a delusive affair, and who space their own holiday over a period of weeks, generally contriving, by skilful management, to add a few unnoticed days to the tale of extended week-ends. Robust heretics are even to be found who scent a paradox in the habit of taking time off in the solstice. They will discourse of the whip to mental energies that city heat, philosophically endured, affords them, and defer making fresh acquaintance with the open spaces at least until the first frosts have allayed such minor rural discomforts as poison ivy and mosquitoes.

These, however, are the happy few—the privileged

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minority. They need no more to be taken into account when considering the common lot of the vacation seeker, than the wealthy commuter twixt Europe and America who uses the Atlantic as his ferry. Vacations for the mass of our people must be taken when business and schools permit. Two things may confidently be asserted about them. Compared with even humble standards in Europe they are too short. Compared with what they might be made even in the exiguous space accorded them, they are too empty.

This emptiness derives largely from their standardization, and this standardization is almost forced upon the American holiday-maker in America by the topography of his country. In no other civilized land does the wilderness persist so close to the house-door as in the United States. Every traveler from abroad has taken note of the contrast between multitude and solitude to be observed in the course of a train journey. He is apt to register a vague feeling that a great deal of waste and distraction attended the settling of the new country. Whatever is valued, he cannot help thinking, is tended and improved. In the ragged woods of second growth that stretch away illimitably to the horizons, the lonely lakes that lie amid a tangle of undergrowth and rotting trees, the litter and rubbish lying round humble dwelling-houses and the neglect to fence and wall and level even round quite imposing ones, he sees no sign of the affection for site and prospect that makes a journey through the old countries a succession of memorable perspectives.

What he is watching is something that, under the comprehensive title of "the great out-of-doors" becomes the playground of the nation as summer comes round. It is rather a rough and ready playground, studded with summer-camps and roadhouses and, in the maritime states, with beaches, that repeat one another's leading features with a regularity often to be observed in its perfection rather as the result of accident than design. Except in a very few sections of the country it is everybody's property, and the sign-boards that warn the trespasser off are, happily, as rare as four-leaved clovers. Tarred and concrete roads whose excellence is a revelation to the overseas visitor, invite to speed and change of scene. And, everywhere these arteries come in sight, in contrast to the solitudes that border them, either in a long silhouette as continuous as the moving targets that used to travel across the far end of an old-fashioned shooting gallery, or held up in a checked and chafing torrent at the gates as the train clangs its way through a level crossing, are cars, and cars, and cars—from the lordly Hispano Suiza or Rolls-Royce to the creaking and swaying Ford packed with shirt-sleeved and pinafored families, all alike on the move, and able to conceive of no happier state and condition than to be on the move.

The strenuousness of the typical American vacation does not date, though many would have it so, from the discovery of the internal combustion engine. Those who are old enough to remember the days when June, July and August brought a golden harvest to the thrifty agriculturist and the thrifty agriculturist's wife in New England, when "city folks" filled the big cottages and farm-houses that may now be seen shuttered and rotting away all over Maine and Vermont and New Hampshire with their flirtations and banjo concerts, and when the "summer girl" added one type the more to our national portrait gallery, will remember a difference in degree rather than in essence. The abiding principle of these summer colonies lingers in the memory as restlessness, a flight from boredom, and a difficulty in filling in the long hours between rising time and bedtime with sufficient canoeing, swimming, picnicking and dancing to induce a sense that the precious fortnight was not being wasted by pursuits that could be conducted just as well in the other fifty weeks of the year. A queer sort of conscience seemed to be about, fostered by habits of work, and suddenly applied to habits of play, and anyone who preferred specifics for recreation, not tested and approved by public opinion, wrote him or herself down as either "high-brow" or morose.

From pointing out flaws in the summer vacation as conceived and exploited, to trying to formulate some ideal of what a summer vacation might be made, is a long step. The very large number to whom vacations mean family reunion may be left out of account. So may the class of which Mr. Sinclair Lewis made such abundant fun in Mantrap, who are rich enough or enterprising enough to turn their holiday into an attempt to realize the life of the screen. For others, a great deal depends on individual taste and relish. At one end of the scale there will always be those to whom the break-off presents itself as an opportunity to give vent to physical energy pent up for months and to indulge in an orgy of physical activity to which city doctors occasionally write a second chapter later on in the year. At the other end are those who secretly resent the interruption to daily habits implied in even a brief term of unsettlement, and who believe they pay rather too dearly by the dead-lift that comes when these habits have to be resumed.

At the cost of a little seeking, some happy means is sure to be found within reach of the most modest holiday maker which will render the golden days all the more memorable by linking them up happily with the leaden days of work and worry. The essence of any holiday is its leisure, and the happiest property of leisure is the opportunity it presents to allow thoughts and considerations which have knocked in vain at the preoccupied mind to enter and perform their healing office. Loafing has a bad name among us. But there is a kind of loafing more fruitful than the most intensively scheduled activity. Monotony is, of all things, the most dreaded by our people upon pleasure bent. But there is a way of flying from monotony which only succeeds in sowing it broadcast.

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THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEK BY WEEK

CAMPAIGNING for a President has become the leading Mexican industry. As far as one can divine at present, the issue of importance is the conflict between the party in power, which will support General Obregon, and the No-Reëlectionists who have proposed the name of General Gomez. Obviously Catholic support, in so far as it is genuinely a political factor, will go to the second candidate, who incidentally has declared himself in favor of religious tolerance. This fact in itself would predict a great social struggle for the coming months. But we must also bear in mind the military character of the several candidates, each of whom is supported by an army. To imagine a similar condition in the United States, one should have to conceive of the army and navy as so fiercely committed to hostile candidates as to be ready to fight at the slightest provocation. There is likely to be plenty of provocation south of the Rio Grande. It is supposed that the attitude taken by Washington may have some effect upon the situation; and indeed, intervention in order to guarantee a peaceful election would be logical in view of the Nicaragua and other precedents. One hopes, however, that the State Department will preserve strict isolation from the scene. Previous interferences on behalf of some Mexican candidate—notably those fostered by President Wilson—have done incalculable harm.

IN VIEW of these circumstances, it is a little difficult to understand the New York World's comment on the situation. On the one hand it announces: "When President Calles completes his term in 1928, Mexico will have had eight years of government uninterrupted by revolution." On the other hand it declares: "Thanks largely to the good sense of the American people, Mexico has in the last year been spared an interference with her domestic development. But Mexico cannot count upon inexhaustible reserves of patience." The inference seems to be that United States patience is contingent upon Mexican ability to develop domestically as she has done during the last eight years. But all of us know that the reason why Calles will end eight years of "government uninterrupted" is precisely outside intervention—the arms embargo and what led up to it. We all know, too, that Mexico has been passing through a very serious revolution, during which civic protest against tyranny was brutally put down by military force under circumstances involving quite unbelievable barbarities. Papers like the World have had little sympathy for this protest and no space for the barbarities. In a word, they have committed themselves to a status quo enforced by arms through the connivance of the United States. That, to say the least, is a peculiar action on the part of journals which profess to support both democratic institutions abroad and an anti-imperialistic policy at home. But for some months past we have grown accustomed to peculiar actions.

AN INSTITUTION that can observe its five hundredth birthday under circumstances that prove it more flourishing than ever before is entitled to a regal festival. The University of Louvain opened its commemorative exercises with a truly international splendor. Perhaps never since the close of the middle-ages has there been seen such a distinguished academic procession. The apostolic nuncio, the king and queen of the Belgians, a host of prelates, diplomats, statesmen, heads of educational institutions, clergy, scholars, practical men of affairs, gathered to witness the passing of an historic moment and to see how Louvain's "university town"—where a throng of scholastic buildings is encircling the historic castle of the dukes of Arenberg—is nearing the first stage of completion. There was much in the scene to interest Americans in a very especial manner. The venerable library, restored to pre-war beauty through the generosity of United States citizens, was solemnly reopened. The structure is to serve henceforth as Louvain's Institute of Art and Archaeology; and so the beneficence of the new world will help to conserve the treasures of the old. The long list of those upon whom honorary degrees were conferred also includes several Americans, among them four members of the hierarchy. Bishop Francis C. Kelley has, we believe, the distinction of being the first American upon whom Louvain has conferred the doctorate in letters. Incidentally, one hears that United States charity is also coming to the assistance of the Bollandists, that remarkable society of hagiographers which, like so much of scholarship

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at Louvain, has been sorely tried by financial hardship. The Louvain centenary is, therefore, an hour of glory in which all of us can take a share for personal as well as general cultural reasons.

TWO events designed to pry the American public loose from dangerous consignments of explosive intolerance to which it has been clinging for dear life have occurred during the past week. The first is the confession of Stephenson, generalissimo of the Indiana Klan, that iniquities committed through the use of Hoosier state and city government "will rock the nation." One hopes that the rocking will prove much like an old-fashioned shaking of a plum-tree upon which more than relatively spoiled fruit is endangering the health of all. The second is the full retraction, by Mr. Henry Ford, of charges brought against the Jews by his official organ, the Dearborn Independent. These accusations, destined to create ill-feeling against a race where at most there was reason only for some disapproval of individuals, have done incalculable harm. The eagerness with which European anti-Semitic groups swallowed what Mr. Ford's paper had to say was particularly ominous. We do not desire to see Mr. Stephenson out of jail or Mr. Ford in it. Both of them, however, need a period of closeting with public opinion. Their followers need to learn that efforts to arouse racial and group antagonisms within the United States are seldom more commendable than a small boy's zeal in promoting the extinction of the house-cat by the family watch-dog.

ON THE Fourth of July, three people were drowned off the pier of Sing Sing prison. The tragedy occurred within plain view of many prisoners and their guards. All three might easily have been saved if someone had been sent to their rescue. But the prison guards not only failed to undertake this rescue themselves, but refused to allow any convict to go out and neglected to notify the warden. Technically they were quite correct. The drowning was taking place outside the prison, and their concern lay with the interior of the prison. From every other point of view, however, they acted in contemptible fashion, risking neither life nor job at a moment when fellow-mortals were in supreme need of assistance. Someone has commented upon this mean streak by saying that nothing better could be expected from the kind of man who is willing to become a prison guard. It is an easy explanation, but it suffers from the fact that many such guards are really splendid fellows. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to wonder why it is that United States bureaucratic employees develop a literalness of mind which seems finally to stunt their imaginations and even their emotions. In all the world there is nobody so deplorably able to see a wisp of hay and ignore a haystack as an American government employee of the lower ranks. Go to a municipal hospital and somebody will spend hours, if need be, getting your name and address on the proper line. Our public service seems hidebound with red tape. But it is not often that one sees the malady in a form as virulent as that manifested at Sing Sing.

MARYLAND origins are so priceless a part of the national heritage that everything done to keep their memory green is a patriotic as well as a religious service. We are particularly glad to see that the proposal to build a shrine on the site occupied by the church at St. Mary's City is meeting with a warm welcome. This was the first Catholic house of worship to be erected in the English colonies and was also the first English Jesuit mission in this country. It is very appropriate, therefore, that the task of reconstruction should have been entrusted to the Reverend John La Farge, a Jesuit and a descendant of an old Maryland family. The first help he received came from the Brome family, which made a donation of the site. These people, long faithful to their Episcopal traditions, have carefully preserved the history of the land during the many years which have passed since they came into possession of it. Now Father La Farge announces that, following a gift from the United States Catholic Historical Society, Mr. George C. Jenkins has promised his personal assistance to the plan. He is a positive guarantee, to all who know his generosity and his public spirit, that the work undertaken will not stop until the goal has been attained. One feels sure that when time comes to observe the Calvert tercentenary in 1934, "Old St. Mary's" will be definitely near a revival of its old religious glory.

REGULATIONS recently issued by the War Department at Washington providing that uniform is to be worn daily at army posts by officers of the land forces and only permitting the wearing of citizen clothing within definite limits, bring the practice of the American army in line with that of continental nations and mark a departure from the custom hitherto observed both in Great Britain and the United States. The prejudice against wearing uniform when off duty is an old one in both countries. Twenty or thirty years ago, unless his route happened to lead him through some army post, it was possible for a traveler from overseas to spend many months in America without once catching a glimpse of the costume that is now a fairly familiar sight in the streets and railroad stations of any big city. In England, the reluctance to advertise the profession of arms went further still. Complacent sergeants of the old school had strange tales to tell of guards visited and inspected on occasion by the officer of the day "in mufti." The war and the adoption of a service dress approximating common sense have broken down this tradition of self-effacement on the part of our fighting forces, and on the whole the change is for the better. The sight of an occasional uniform amid our drab and anonymous crowds, even though it is now shorn of the gold lace

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and glitter that, according to the Moor of Venice, made ambition virtue, serves at least as a pleasant reminder that activities still exist among us unconnected with the great principle of doing the best that one is able to do for oneself.

PROMPT publicity for good plays seems to emerge as the first practical result of the formation of the Church and Drama Association. Just how much this means may not be apparent to the average theatre-goer unfamiliar with the financial arrangements on Broadway. It might be assumed that any good play with sufficient financial backing to carry it through the first two or three weeks would gather its own momentum by word-of-mouth praise. But the difficulty lies in the rental terms exacted by most theatre-owners. They usually demand a definite percentage of the gross box-office receipts with a minimum guarantee. But this minimum seldom satisfies them. If the receipts of the first two weeks are not large enough to bring the return higher than the minimum—or to promise a higher return in the near future—the play is abruptly asked to betake itself elsewhere. That is why press notices, although never a sure index to the popularity of a play, on numerous occasions cut short its life before the public has a chance to give expression to its more practical verdict.

THE Church and Drama Association tries to handle this difficult situation by circularizing its members, by using the radio and every other prompt means of increasing attendance at a worthy play. Mr. Frank Gillmore, treasurer of the Actors' Equity Association, in his recent annual address, said: "We do know of two or three plays this season which have been saved by the Church and Drama Association and at a time when its machinery was not complete, indeed, when its influence was negligible compared to what it will be in a few months and in a few years." This is no small tribute. Many an organization has promised more and done less. If the standard of judgment applied to current plays by the Association reflects a broad and sane understanding of the best the theatre can offer, then its work should have a lasting value far greater than the promise held forth by last season's vague platform. The movement is well worth watching and encouraging.

THE idea that wealth and labor should be conscripted during times of war has, one sees, made some impression in the United States. Speaking at a Fourth of July celebration, Senator Royal S. Copeland declared that "not only shall there be a conscription of man-power, the force of which must face the cannon's mouth, but there shall be a conscription of wealth and labor of every sort." This conception of future armed struggles has been making the rounds of various circles in Europe. It is dictated, of course, by popular resentment of the fact that some people who remained in safety while soldiers were fighting and their families were enduring privation of every sort, emerged into peace with huge fortunes. Such despicable selfishness ought to be made impossible. But one hopes some other means will be found in this country than the frank acceptance of the principle of conscription. The assumption that all citizens can be forced into uniform when war is declared is the real source of the whole monstrous thing called modern militarism. In the first place, it testifies to an over-centralization of government of a kind which would have been impossible in the past. The days when rulers fought their wars with professional soldiers were days in which fighting still bore some resemblance to a legitimate use of peace power. Today the levée en masse has become a sure guarantee that pride will battle the thing out to the end, which is always catastrophe. In the second place, no citizen who feels that a given war is unjust can be forced, with any degree of righteousness, to take part in it. This moral privilege ought not to be surrendered, no matter how great the pretext.

PHILOSOPHERS who believe, with the Frenchman, that all life is a comedy to those who think, may well have spared a quiet smile at the recent centenary celebrations held in honor of Samuel Crompton, the inventor of the spinning mule. For the great invention, out of which untold millions have been made, was little benefit to the inventor. A "mystical, religious man," with no talent whatever for the rough and tumble of business, and with the love of music that often crops up in surprising places in the north of England, Samuel was fated to see his revolutionary device exploited by cannier minds and to end his days earning a few shillings by putting together wringing and washing machinery for humble neighbors. When he died in June, 1827, the total value of his goods and furniture was estimated at $85.00, with debts considerably in excess. Crompton's strange story, like that of many and many another inventor, enforces the fact, often observed, that the inventive mind belongs rather to the contemplative than the active category of thought, and that, of all human beings, inventors are apt to be the least worldly. It also proves that the meanness of commercialism, like charity, begins at home, and that the rare spirits whose genius and ingenuity it exploits must look elsewhere for their reward than to those who, in the unforgettable words which Mr. Bernard Shaw tells us sum up the industrial system in a distich: "Half ignorant . . . turn an easy wheel that sets sharp wits at wrack to pinch and peel."

VERY probably good professors (of whom there are, surely, not so few as is generally assumed) ought to insert codicils in their wills specifying that none of their lectures shall be published post mortem. One fancies that the sage himself, if he follows publishers' announcements from his celestial hacienda, must be quite as astonished as the earthly reader to dis-

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cover that he once said such and such things to a select group. C. Alphonso Smith was a very good, within limits a commendable, scholar. He did as much as any other southern litterateur of his time to awaken his neighbors to some consciousness of intellectual energy. But precisely because one gladly recommends such a verdict on Dr. Smith, it is difficult to understand why the University of North Carolina has published Southern Literary Studies, a series of lectures concerned more or less with American books and culture.

IT CONTAINS numerous paragraphs quite as remarkable as this: "Whether idealized or not, the Indian of Cooper has. . . . supplied a means of contrast for our highly institutionalized life. He has furnished the potential material for a national drama and a national opera. He has proved not only the anvil on which we wrought out our national genesis but the background against which Europe contemplates with undiminished interest the early centuries of our national existence." The true meaning of this comment is a trifle hard to discern. An anvil-wrought "genesis" is, to begin with, so unusual in itself that if we have really managed it there is a feather of some size in our caps. It is easier to see that the Indian was an "anvil" we thumped pretty hard, for more practical purposes than setting up a pretty "background" for Europeans to look at. But after all, said Indian ought to be hugely content. He has supplied the material for unborn operas and dramas. One is tempted to say, with all due charity to Dr. Smith's memory, that the Indian's most remarkable purpose has been to lead professors astray into figures of speech.

LITTLE OR NOTHING

WE ARE informed that a serious-looking young woman sat in the office of the dean of one of America's innumerable summer-schools, waiting to register for those courses which would promptly bustle her off toward literary success. In her pocket there was a letter from a predecessor, already famous as a writer of stories with a punch. And our young woman's mind was made up that if composition and criticism, literary history and a study of the market, could "do the trick," she would stay up all night with every one of them. Then the dean appeared and smiled in his weary way. He had put in a hard afternoon's work registering dozens of aspiring authors (they come by the dozen nowadays) and he viewed the waiting client with unusual benevolence because she happened to be the last. As a result he gave her advice which we shall not record, but which can, perhaps, be inferred from the circumstance that she married happily a short time afterward.

The descent of literary ambition upon training-schools established to give instruction in the various forms of writing is extraordinary. One cannot blame the schools for acceding to the demand and giving what is so earnestly wanted. But one is quite sure that the phenomenon itself demonstrates a wide-spread public misunderstanding of both literature and education. Writing is, after all, a matter of having something to say and of growing into a habit of saying it in one's own manner. Training-schools can supply neither of these things. They can give valuable criticism, but there is ultimately no such thing as "constructive" criticism—that is, criticism which can create what does not exist in the product to which it is applied.

Why, then, doesn't somebody start a movement the other way? Why not set out on a voyage of cultural discovery, with the purpose of accumulating the "somethings to write about" which exist in the United States? One can imagine dozens of brave young people bustling about, forcing the American spirit out of its hiding-places, gathering tradition and experience, and learning to know rhythm because they have seen it revealed in life. If our future literature is to have any substance, it must derive from something more sturdy and less circumscribed than the class in composition. It must also do more than merely "record" the caprices of human nature, or apply a definite literary form to existing material. It must be an art which has the form of our art of living.

To some such conclusions—difficult to phrase concretely—one arrives after reading such a charming little book as Henri Pourrat's La Fontaine au Bois Dormant. Pourrat is one of the best of those who have tried to recover the "regionalistic" attitude for French letters. "Popular art" as opposed to the sophisticated conventions of the journalistic confraternity is the goal—an art which appears "when the gift for it has been given, not when there is an obligation to produce." Its models are the habit of long inner compression of an idea, which results finally in the compact and exquisitely polished proverb; the slumbering, unforced vitality of natural imagination, which flings its eerie shadow with all the deliberation of a tree that waits patiently both for its own branches to expand and for the inimitable caress of twilight; and a wise distrust of rationalism, which is never more than a snapshot and often merely a blur. Yes, if one could learn to write in such a spirit, no expenditure of time or energy would be too great. But how many will, even if the "institutes for creative writing" multiply beyond number? Alas, it is conceivable that a day will arrive when one shall have to flee to the Esquimaux in order to avoid the crowds who have learned to begin their stories with a bit of "peppy dialogue," and who, by dint of exhausting labor, have become most impeccable paragraphers!

Goethe said something to the effect that all great creative work is the outgrowth of circumstance. That does not wholly eliminate the term "genius," but it suggests that genius is by no means the detached thing which seems to be believed in at present.

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THE APPEAL OF THE CHURCH OF ROME

By PERCY T. FENN

(The following paper by an influential Anglican clergyman is published here because it illustrates a state of mind that seems to be more general than is commonly supposed. We are naturally not in agreement with its conclusions, but offer it in what we believe is accord with the plea for consideration of the problems antecedent to church union, made by the Holy Father.—The Editors.)

AS I sit in my study from day to day, musing over my sermon work, my eyes fall frequently upon a book in my library, entitled The Decay of the Church of Rome. It was published in 1909, and I bought it soon after it came out. It is full of all kinds of statistics with which the writer tries to prove that the Roman Church is losing ground throughout the world, and that its former devotees are becoming liberals and nationalists. Perhaps the wish of the writer was father to the thought.

For it seems to me that the only church which shows any power and virility today is the Roman Church. Frankly, I could never be a Romanist. I can see no sense in conducting service in a foreign tongue, in the recognition of the jurisdiction of a foreign bishop, in the celibacy of the clergy, and in enforced, or compulsory, confession. And I haven't much use for the commercial side of the Roman Church.

But the appeal she makes to me, and to an almost innumerable multitude of people outside of her communion, is striking and well-nigh irresistible. She is the one church in Christendom that does make such an appeal. Protestantism has lost its vigor, and is sick unto death. It was founded upon negation, has become split up into two or three hundred warring and contending bodies, it has lost—if it ever possessed—the true idea of worship, it places little emphasis upon the sacramental side of religion, and it is making of itself a moral policeman to thunder in our ears the perpetual warning: "Thou shalt not!" I do not forget the thousands of noble, God-fearing people who have been reared under its influence, or the part it has played in the development of our country. But after the best has been said for it, it is an unlovely system, and I should feel very little sorrow over its demise, and should gladly utter an appropriate requiescat in pace over its grave.

For the Episcopal Church—the via media between Rome and Protestantism—much can be said. It is the old church of the English-speaking people, and is bound up with their liberties. It is not a product of the Reformation, but has a ministry and a sacramental system as old as Christianity itself. It has preserved the ideas and ideals of worship, it appeals to the aesthetic sense, and has an unexcelled system of training through creed, church year, and church school curriculum. But the large liberty of teaching which that church permits, and in which she even glories, and the large diversities of ceremonial which prevail everywhere, make her seem a city of confusion. She is a perfect Babel of tongues, and the faith of which she is the custodian is capable of antagonistic interpretations. And in her inability to enforce her discipline and her laws, she is the wonder of the world!

Of the Roman Church one must speak with the profoundest respect. Her organization, her missionary spirit, her methods of propaganda, are really admirable. Her church buildings are alluring, inspiring and homelike. The doors of her churches are always open for prayer and meditation. There is an atmosphere about them which is restful and which one cannot find anywhere else. I frequently go into these churches to pray for my sick before the Blessed Sacrament, and I have been struck, again and again, by the numbers of people who frequent them. I have noticed this in our own country, and I noticed it especially, in the numerous churches I visited last summer on the continent of Europe, in Paris, Chartres, Germany, Belgium, and in England. The side chapels were full of votive and thank-offerings, placed there by people to whom religion is a real, vital affair.

One offering made an impression upon me that I shall never forget. It was a little bunch of withered flowers, left by the side of the altar of one of these chapels, with a note in a childish hand, thanking God for the donor's success in passing her school examinations! Old men came in, and old women with shawls thrown over their heads, and little children with their arms full of bundles, to say their prayers before the reserved Sacrament, and to make their wants known to the Father of us all. Protestantism shuts and bars its doors when the Sunday services are over; and even if its church buildings were open daily, there would be found nothing to attract in the bare and ugly interior, with its vacant pews and its empty auditorium—the organ or pulpit usurping the place of the altar and the cross or crucifix. The Protestant churches seem to have been erected for the performances of man, all others for the exaltation of God.

Even the cathedrals of the English Church lack the charm of the Roman churches. Westminster Abbey is nothing but a national pantheon, and Saint Paul's Cathedral, in the summer-time, is denuded of all attractiveness. Such a service as the one I attended one Sunday morning would not be tolerated in this country. The music was execrable, and the sermon, by an unknown priest, was thoroughly mediocre. The cathedral was crowded with people, but many showed their lack of interest by leaving during the sermon.

And then there were the everlasting fees of admission. In Westminster Abbey alone there were three

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different charges, to different parts of the building, and I paid them all. But it chafed my very soul that I, a priest of that same church, should have to do it. In Lincoln Cathedral there was a notice that no admission charge would be made, but that every visitor was expected to drop sixpence into a box provided for that purpose. I could not help regarding this as a specimen of English humor.

Some day, when the church is disestablished, things will be different. And when that day comes the Church of England will be born again!

But to see the Roman churches on Sundays and on holy days is wonderfully impressive. If anybody has an idea that that Church is not functioning, let him watch the Sunday congregations. We sometimes hear that the French people have deserted their churches. This is the most horrible libel one can utter against them. Their churches are part of their very life. They are their spiritual homes. They positively throng them at every Mass. In fact, they do this everywhere.

There is a Roman church just two blocks from where I live; and every Sunday morning regiments of people pass my house on their way to Mass. They start in early in the morning—when the Protestant world is sound asleep—and they are going and returning until late noon. Even on holy days, when I can get but a handful to church out of 400 communicants, crowds of faithful Romanists are flocking by to their place of worship. Now church-going may be a habit; but everybody must admit that it is a good one. With the Romanist it is more than a habit; it is a debt he owes his God, and he is not happy unless he can discharge that debt. With non-Romanists it is largely a matter of inclination. If the day be fine, and everything else be propitious, a man may take it into his head to go to church. But there doesn't seem to be any obligation that compels him to go. And, too often, he goes to criticize, or to be entertained, but not to worship God. The Romanist goes to worship.

But you say: "Yes, but see how he spends the rest of his day. In the afternoon he will go to the ball game, and in the evening to the movies." We answer, that is his concern; it is none of our business to censor his life. If his conscience will let him do those things, it is his lookout, not ours. He has paid his debt to God, and that is what many of his fellows refuse to do. And we must remember this: God has never declared that Sunday is to be a day of worship only. He has given us the day for relaxation, rest, refreshment, as well as worship. The old Puritan Sabbath has gone, thank God, and I doubt whether one person in a hundred would wish to bring it back again.

But the point is this: Would these churches be crowded on Sunday, as they unquestionably are, if the Roman Church were losing ground? She is not only not losing ground, but she is constantly enlarging her borders, and extending her influence. New parishes are being created everywhere, and new schools, hospitals, homes and reformatories. And would she get the money for these buildings, if her people did not love her? But she does get it. And the way in which she gets it, and usually from the poor, is amazing.

A church that provides such a system of education for her young as the Roman Church does, can never die. She may have her troubles, but she can never die. She takes the child from its infancy, and saturates it with her faith. The average Roman Catholic child of seven or eight years knows more about religion than the average Protestant adult! If you doubt it, make the test and be convinced. The child is taught the Faith, and made to practise it. It is baptized in infancy, confirmed at seven or eight, receives its First Communion, and after that it seldom strays. Protestantism neglects its young. The Sacrament of Baptism is seldom stressed, and the child grows up uninstructed, until such time as it is worked into some kind of hysteria through the efforts of a professional revivalist. Then it becomes identified with the church for a time, and after a time lapses. The Roman Church is wise, and claims the child for all time.

Another thing which appeals to us is the ascetic life of many Roman Catholics. Their religion is an every-day affair, and not something taken out on Sunday, and packed away in camphor when Sunday is over. It is also a joyful thing; it seems to transfigure their very faces. Their God is a God Who lives with them, shares their burdens, guides and directs them, comforts them in their sorrows, and ministers to them from the cradle to the grave.

Look at the innumerable multitudes of saints that have been produced by that Church. Read such books as The Little Flowers of Saint Francis of Assisi, and his Mirror of Perfection. The story of his life of self-abnegation, leading at last to the "stigmata"—the reproduction in his body of the five wounds of Christ!—reads like a fairy story. It seems incredible that flesh and blood should so prostrate themselves at the feet of the Christ, and live for Him through such countless hardships and sacrifices. Yet Saint Francis was only one of myriads that have chosen the Way of the Cross under the teachings of their Church. A church which has inspired, and can still inspire, such whole-souled devotion to the highest ideals that can be conceived by man, will never die.

May I say again, that I hold no brief for Rome. I could never follow her. If, however, she would cut herself loose from the mediaevalism which disfigures her, repudiate the so-called Petrine figments, give an honest and logical interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, and content herself with spiritual power and authority rather than temporal, the world would be impressed and attracted toward her, and every suspicion would be removed. But she will not do this!

However, we cannot hide the admiration we feel for her sublime witness to the Faith when creeds are crumbling, for her magnificent organization and order, and for the love and devotion she creates in the hearts and lives of those whom she serves.

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THE NAUGHTING OF THE FIEND

By ENID DINNIS

SINCE when is it that Catholics have become so respectful in their manner toward the devil? There is outstanding evidence that our ancestors treated the fiend with contumely, and this not because they regarded him as a myth, as the modernist does, but from a reason which had a sound theological basis, and from which was drawn a logical conclusion which is the mediaeval's apology for the comic devil of the mystery play and cloister art.

The logical conclusion was this: Since God is stronger than the devil, and since all things are made to work together for good, the fiend's most strenuous action amounted to a strenuous trouncing of himself. God's permission, for His own private reason, lay behind the most terrifying activities of the devil, whose weapon was always a boomerang which returned to strike the thrower. Hence: the bigger the boomerang the nastier the ultimate blow. In this spectacle the mediaeval mind would see something essentially humorous, and in an uncouth age which found entertainment in the grotesque the devil would not fail to get his due as a mirth-provoker, and this not only from the yokel audience at a miracle play, but from the saints and mystics themselves.

We have a classical instance of this "setting at naught of the fiend" in Dame Juliana's Revelations of Divine Love. The recluse lady describes there the vision seen as she lay in what in the course of nature should have been her death agony. Of the fiend she says:

> I saw Our Lord scorning his malice and naughting his unmight; and He will that we do so. For this sight I laughed mightily, and that made them to laugh that were about me, and their laughing was a liking to me: I thought that I would that all my even Christians had seen as I saw, then should they have laughed with me. . . . I saw not Christ laughing but I wot that the sight that He showed me made me to laugh; for I understood that we may laugh in comforting of ourselves and joying in God for that the fiend is overcome.

So Juliana of Norwich received her permission to laugh at the "unmight" of the fiend, and it is surely a weakness of our age that we cannot laugh with her, like the maidens round her bed. The Protestant has his own reasons for sobriety. A devil who can no longer be often dismissed with the sign of the Cross and a sprinkling of holy water merits to be treated with respect by those who still believe in his existence as an isolated supernatural entity standing out from the sentimental or allegorical creations of the middle-ages—a kind of god of evil. Certainly a species of respect is paid to him by those who do not laugh at him as well as at his horns. Milton gave Satan dignity, the very last thing except sanctity that a mediaeval would have connected with the fiend. This is a Protestant reformed Satan, but many Catholics would seem to have a sneaking regard for him. They would demur at agreeing with the suggestion that when Luther made a present of his ink-pot to the devil the latter in his turn passed it on to the author of Paradise Lost.

They might, indeed, be disposed to urge that the naughting of the fiend is a gesture too reminiscent of the brutal pastimes of a bull-baiting age to be repeated in our own day. But, none the less, our own delicate day needs a reaction against the respectful attitude of many pious folk toward the person obliquely alluded to as "the evil one." He is even named with a fear which Mother Juliana might scornfully have termed a "reverent dread."

Today the fiend is implicitly credited by certain devout folk with God's own attribute of infinity. They believe him to be infinitely evil, whereas he isn't infinitely anything—he is a finite being, like other creatures. God is infinitely good, but the devil is not infinitely evil. He is as evil as he can be—he would be delighted to be infinitely evil, but his power, his might, is "locked in God's hand." It is quite common for pious Catholics to believe that Satan can read the future, and that he can read the hearts of men. Theologians tell us that he can do neither. God alone can read the future, and communicate His knowledge to His seers and prophets. The devil, they likewise tell us, can only get at what we are thinking by a process of deduction. Being still possessed of an angelic intelligence, though a debased one, his feats in this direction are of a superhuman order. He is a kind of super-Sherlock Holmes, but he is not an evil deity. His guesses at the future may be equally shrewd ones, communicated to his friends, the fortune-tellers, but he does not represent evil in the same way that God represents good. Yet there are Catholics who do not realize this. He is constantly credited with the divine attribute of omniscience, and with the knowledge which the unfallen angels and the saints, by virtue of their cleanness of heart, are allowed to see mirrored in the mind of God.

The vulgar mind is more untheological in its conception of the fiend today than when it placed credence in his horns and hoofs. Those symbols were faithful ones, at any rate. The fiend's intelligence must have become inconceivably debased by malice. If sin has darkened the understanding of man, how must it have played havoc with the understanding of Lucifer! Saint Paul admits that principalities and powers have the advantage over the wits of man, but he also reminds us that there is that in man, redeemed and sanctified,

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which must make him the victor. The cunning which the mediaevals attributed to the fiend was always a low and vulgar thing. Satan is crafty where Lucifer was intellectual. Where Lucifer had knowledge he has sleight, or cunning. He is a master-trickster. The fiend's intellectual limitation which makes him unable to learn that God can't be circumvented, that in the end his every action must work out in good, shows how miserably distorted is the intelligence which seeks the ruin of souls. Our rude ancestry realized that the fiend cut a ridiculous figure. The age whose sense of humor was tickled by the antics of a dwarf or of a drunken man instinctively included the devil amongst its mountebanks. His ever-renewed attempt to achieve the impossible was a contortion. The acute intelligence failing to grasp what every human child can learn in the first article of the Creed, was a grimace at which to make merry. The spiritual deformity of the fiend made cause for mirth. He was depicted with horns and a tail to show what an absurd creature he was. The old monastic artists carved his likeness on the backs of the choir seats, or painted it on the margins of their prayer-books in the form of a fox with a bird's head. They refused to regard him with awe, treating him, instead, with contumely.

Much mockery of the devil goes on today, but it is the antithesis of the great mediaeval joke. The drolleries of the Ingoldsby Legends were based, not on a scorn of the devil, but on a scorn of the belief in his existence. Modernism has banished a belief in a personal devil. Evil remains to be accounted for, and it is easier to turn and mock at a mythical being, although it may be an unparliamentary form of argument, than to explain the existence of evil without a faith in Juliana's "great privity," in the final revealing of which "all shall be seen to be well." On the other hand, it may be readily granted that it is easy to be sentimental and belittle the powers of one whom Christ Himself called "the prince of this world." The enemy of mankind can be treated with contumely only under given conditions. After all, it was the monk, the man who knew something about renunciation, about fasting and penance, who carved his comicalities in church; and he carved them on the backs of the seats of the men who rose at night to pray. The devil running away with a monk in his mouth was an elementary joke, but it was not a cheap one. It was the recluse in her cell who laughed at the devil, apart from his horns.

And this brings us to the great secret of the naughting of the prince of darkness, the author of all the evil which makes men's hearts stand still with fear and their souls sicken within them. The men and women who treated Satan with contumely were men and women who were forever meditating on the Passion of Christ. Juliana, the woman who laughed at the fiend until others laughed with her from the sheer infection of it without themselves seeing anything, had asked for a bodily sickness that she might have more feeling in the Passion of Christ "for I would be one of them that suffer with Him." Other sight or showing she desired none "save to have more true mind in the sufferings of Christ." But there came, with the wondrous revelation of the Passion, this vision of the futility of the machinations of the fiend:

> And he [the fiend] hath as much sorrow when God giveth him leave to work, as when he worketh not: and that is for that he may never do as evil as he would; for his might is all taken into God's hand.

It is the generation which has no overweening desire to have "more true mind in the Passion of Christ" which has become so reverential toward the fiend. After her laughter Juliana tells us that she became serious, saying to her maidens:

> I see three things, game, scorn, and earnest. I see game that the fiend is overcome; I see scorn that God scorneth him . . . and I see earnest that he is overcome by the blessedful passion and death of Our Lord Jesu Christ, and that was done in full great earnest and with sad [serious] travail.

Juliana's whole revelation was concerned with the Passion of Our Lord. For twenty years she sat and pondered, going deeper and deeper into the mystery; then she arrived at its meaning. Love was its meaning; and to the love which can suffer is linked the laughter which makes merry over the naughting of the fiend.

So long as we see earnest, so long may we see game and join in the infectious laughter of the anchoress. It is faith which can see in the larger calamities of life, in its sorrows and circumventions, the spectacle of the fiend chasing his tail, or running round a tree in the hope of catching sight of his own back. It is faith, a very courageous faith, which "sees game" when the fiend's gyration is fast and furious. And although Our Lord does not laugh Himself (for after all the fiend is His creature) we may understand that we may laugh in comforting ourselves and in joying in God that the fiend is overcome.

There Is a Garden

There is a garden waits for me somewhere
Across the sea, in islands cool and green.
It is a country I have never seen,
And yet, in dreams, I breathe its soft, grey air,
And feel its white fog fingers in my hair.
O tell me, do the heavy lilacs lean
Along the lanes of villages serene?
And is dusk luminous with plum and pear?

I think late twilights lie on emerald lawns,
And shadows, like dark men, lurk under trees;
While sound of surf from the surrounding seas
Goes beating through one's sleep, into the dawns.
And there are little lambs, on soft, green hills,
And, I have heard, daisies and daffodils.

MARION ETHEL HAMILTON.

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THE RHODES SCHOLARSHIPS

By W. E. SCHUTT

LAST month marked the twentieth anniversary of the return to America of the first full complement of Rhodes scholars at Oxford. With inconsiderable exception, each of those twenty years has brought back to us a quota of forty men or so whom we had handpicked to absorb that peculiar culture which is Oxford's and to disseminate it amongst us.

In a recent editorial, the New York World briefly examined the justification, as time is making it apparent, for the monumental educational scheme of the founder of Rhodesia, and finds some significant words to say upon the subject. Refusing to credit the conclusions, widely attributed to Mr. A. L. Fisher, late vice-chancellor of Sheffield University, that the scholarships are to be written down a failure merely because no outstanding figure either in politics or scholarship, with the exception of President Aydelotte of Swarthmore, has as yet emerged from their ranks, the World points out that the average age of Rhodes graduates is as yet only forty, and that the time to talk about success or failure must be deferred at least for another decade.

It may be admitted at once that there is no apparent sign of any tremendous upheaval in our civilization as a result of the return of the Rhodes scholars. Public interest in the scholarships has waned until they have become a commonplace. State after state in these past years has failed to offer a candidate to fill the quota in the scattered representation. A careless estimate would suggest that the Rhodes scheme is a failure.

And I am inclined to agree with that estimate, though with an important reservation. The scholarships lack much of having consummated either our too-enthusiastic hopes or those of the founder. That I grant. But it seems to me that the failure of the scheme—if failure it be—is not due to any fault inherent in the idea, but rather to mistakes in the execution of the working plan, and in some part to mistaken standards. And I agree further that it is not even yet time to pass judgment, all the more because of those very mistakes.

It would be interesting at the outset to inquire into the distribution of Rhodes scholars among the phases of our civic life. Latest statistics available reveal the percentages of such distribution to be as follows: Education, 29 percent; law, 22 percent; business, 10 percent; administration and government service, 7 percent; medicine, 6 percent; ministry, 4 percent; social work, 2 percent; journalism, 2 percent. Surely that is a distribution throughout the breadth and depth of our national life, wide enough to justify us in a predication of catholicism of influence.

The mistaken notions that have robbed that influence of its maximum potentiality fall into three categories: inadequacy of the earlier boards of selection, in that they were often ignorant of what type of man was best fitted to absorb and to give out Oxford culture; lack of understanding by the scholars chosen, of the means and ends of an Oxford course; false notions on our part as to what to expect from Oxford. In no quarter, to sum up, have proper standards been applied.

Our standards for the education of our youth in foreign universities have been derived mainly from the experience of our graduate students in the German universities. It is unnecessary to point out to what extent Halle and Jena and Goettingen have influenced our education during the past three or four generations, or how fundamentally that influence differs from what Oxford offers.

Vastly greater numbers of Americans have attended these universities than have yet gone to Oxford as Rhodes scholars. Most of them returned to the teaching profession here, from which their influence was the more directly, the more deeply, stamped upon rising generations. I dare say that the German influence on our education was more emphatically felt within twenty years of its first entry into our life, than Oxford influence has so far been. It was something more concrete, more directly measurable and even sensible, than the subtler, more elusive culture that Oxford has to offer, which to a great extent is not measurable at all by our most revered standards.

That German influence, however, thus injected into our scheme of education, very naturally colored the selection of Rhodes scholars. Our educators derived from their German training their preconception of what our young men would find at Oxford; and therefore made their choices on the basis of that preconception. Most of the Rhodes scholars thus elected, moreover, went to Oxford with aims preformulated by the traditions of German post-graduate work: which, be it never so valuable per se, is at least of another race of giants. And many of these men disabused their minds of their preconceived aims too late to profit by their ultimate orientation.

Oxford is not to be evaluated by the sole standard of scholarship. Her influence works in complex and subtle ways that defy analysis. Her inspiration comes, not from books and courses, but from the living human force of her educational ideals. Her theory of culture is qualitative rather than quantitative. Her *training* is in substance rather than in method; her ideal is thought rather than research.

For Oxford is her social life. True, she gives lectures and courses. But it is not by them chiefly that she passes on the real Oxford. It is through her so-

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cial life that she endows her culture. It is the interchange of characteristic ideas that carries her intellectual values. She is more than a university, as we are wont to define the term; she is, as Cardinal Newman puts it, "a self-perpetuating tradition, a genius loci, which imbues and forms, more or less as he surrenders himself to it, every individual who is brought under its shadow."

Too many Rhodes scholars have failed to surrender themselves. They have been sent there by boards of selection who did not understand that social adaptability is a prime essential in a man who is to absorb Oxford into himself. Too many have gone with the notion learned in their home universities—that social life is waste of time. Too many have possessed the idea that Oxford is an affair of books and lectures and examinations only, and have therefore missed utterly that which Oxford really is. Too many have lived their three years on the Isis imbued with the determination to maintain at all costs their national independence, little realizing that the armor of Americanism they have thrown up about themselves shuts out the very thing they had come to acquire.

But gradually, throughout these twenty years, that order of things is changing. Gradually the state boards of electors are coming to be composed of those very men who returned to us twenty years ago this June and in the succeeding years, men with a sure knowledge of what Oxford is, even if they failed to capture it for themselves. These men are qualified to choose as Rhodes scholars such students as are most likely to benefit to the full by residence at Oxford.

In Oxford, too, there are healthy signs of a growing appreciation by Rhodes scholars of the fact that Oxford is, in actuality, its social life. For many years the American Club, founded with honest intent by the pioneers under the Rhodes bequest, to enable them to maintain their Americanism in the midst of foreign influences, has been at last voted out of existence: and that, apparently, not so much as a matter of sagacious policy, as from sheer desuetude. It is a good sign, an enheartening sign.

Is this strange elusive culture that is Oxford, of real value to an American? What is the Oxford tradition? In so far as it can be defined, it is still the tradition that the Dominicans and the Franciscans endowed it with—a burning love of mankind, with all the tolerance, all the recognition of individuality, all the fervent quest for emancipation, which that quality connotes. Oxford is a place of truth and of paradox, the most ancient of inspirational seats of learning, the most modern in its alert but tolerant challenge of intellectual authority.

It is still too soon to expect much of this leaven in our national life as a result of the Rhodes scholarships. The subtle tradition of Oxford is not to be absorbed immediately and immediately passed on. As it needed unnumbered centuries to create itself, so will it take time to make itself felt as a leaven here.

But already there are signs of it. We find a growing inclination in American colleges, notably in Princeton, toward a tutorial system of higher education. That is the only wise and efficient system for any institution of learning above the grade of a correspondence school. We discover on the educational horizon a growing opposition to mass instruction, to impersonal and therefore meaningless standards of grading, to blind acceptance of authority or the unguided rebellion against it such as mass instruction must entail; and in place of these ancient ills, we descry a promise of general acceptance of the tutorial system that fosters the development of the individual and of individual thought.

How much of this spread of allegiance to the tutorial system is due to Rhodes scholars, it is impossible to estimate. It has arisen chiefly within this twenty-year period. Many of the leading Rhodes scholars in educational work have sponsored it and are working it out. It would seem, therefore, that the leaven of Oxford is beginning to work where it must first be felt—in the education of our young men. And so we may withhold our judgment that the Rhodes scholarship scheme has failed, and abide in hope.

AN IDYLL OF FRIBOURG

By WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS

MANY years ago, an American family happened to be living in Switzerland, in the mediaeval town of Fribourg. The town stands on a bluff, at a bend in the swift green and white Sarine River enclosing it on three sides, several hundred feet below. A stout wall and defense towers held the land side; on the side across the river, opposite the bend, an outer wall wandered over the hills, making impregnable the difficult descent to the river over the farther cliff. On the inner tip of the bend lay the lower town, on a strip of detritus, connected with the upper town by a street on end, or intermittent stairway down the cliff. On the cliff edge of the town hung the solid houses of the local aristocracy—a decent, not too modern face turned to the city street, the rear descending (at least in the thousand-year-old dwelling these Americans lived in) through cellar after cellar and subterranean passages, to a legendary egress under the principal church of the Basse-Ville—an exploration forbidden to boys under all the parental and municipal pains devisable. Comfortably bourgeois on the outside, the interior of the house, all vaulted in stone, stone flagged even in the upper parts, was paneled in the living-rooms in age-old black oak; a mediaeval city stronghold of the Zaehringens furnished to modern needs.

Three languages prevailed in the town: down below, rough Swiss German; in the Haute-Ville, French, and, as in all the country round about, the language of the "armaillis," called a dialect, but more nearly a submerged tongue.

In the centre rose the cathedral, famous for generations back for its great organ; famous at that time in a very living way through its bishop, Monseigneur Mermillod, the old lion of the Kulturkampf, the silver clarion of Switzerland's religious battle.

Fribourg was a town of the middle-ages, undisturbed by a new railway station, by its two great suspension bridges over

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the Sarine gorges, or even by the new and famous Catholic University.

Near the land wall rose a straight, round hill, approached by a steep, cobbled street and a long, winding, covered staircase, crowned by the turreted, castle-like college of Saint Michel, heavily walled, stone corridored, its ancient knightly fish pond in the centre; orchard, poultry yard, piggery, playground and kitchen garden where one might have expected the tilting field, The "collegiens" were dimly aware that the dark shadow of "the Jesuits" hung over the place; that it had once been theirs, and had played a part in the Reformation. Very few of them, though, knew exactly what a Jesuit looked like or did, except the one foreigner in the place, the twelve-year-old American from the Grand'rue. He had known very well at home those courtly, scholarly and kindly Jesuits who were the intervening link between the royal schools of Europe and our own American expansion; who were the spiritual great-nephews of John Carroll and the spiritual cousins of his own archbishop, James Gibbons.

Down in a dark corner of the old church, under the altar of the last side chapel, on the left of the great door opening outside of the walls, lay an object of fascination to this same small foreigner: a brown little mummy of a man, a Jesuit and apparently a personage, for he had a Latin inscription on the glass front of his tomb, and his name: Peter Canisius.

One was not used to bodies in glass cases, under altars, in America, but he was not a terrifying old gentleman. Very peaceful, rather, very kindly, and an enormous help to a small boy very lost in a strange language, utterly strange customs, among a couple of hundred boys of all sizes and all degrees of torturing ingenuity, who looked upon him either as a redskin from the outer wilderness, or with the intense and over-personal curiosity given to a freak in a circus side-show.

The nice, quiet, brown old gentleman was a true friend. Somehow or other he seemed to understand loneliness, perhaps because he had been left behind, and because he, too, was in a country and among people strange to him. It was great comfort to escape from hazing and badgering, and to sit hidden and very still in his corner, wondering who he was and what he had done in that place.

It was with awe that the boy learned, later, what a personage he was. It was with a feeling as of the crowning of a friend that he read, much later, of his canonization.

The Way

Walk not too near these outcast sons of men
Where passed your Christ ahead! You, too, may share
The rabble's wrath! In time take heed! Beware
The woe—the bitter shame of Him again!
Your flaming zeal speak not so rash, so loud!
Keep on your prudent way within the crowd.

What if they mark you of His band and cry:
"Behold this one, as well"? Ah, you should know
The jeers, the stones, for all that with Him go!
Have caution, fool! Let others yearn and die!
These broken ones you love with hot heartbreak
Can save you not! Be warned by His mistake!

Remember how He spurned the risk and loss!
Remember how they nailed Him to a cross!

LAURA SIMMONS.

A COMMUNICATION

THE TEACHING BROTHER

Cincinnati, Ohio.

TO the Editor:—In The Commonweal of June 29, Mr. George N. Shuster penned a very able article on the teaching brotherhoods in the United States. As a "Brother's boy," I read this article with distinct pleasure, but I was somewhat disappointed that Mr. Shuster should have overlooked a very active and efficient organization, the Marianists or the Brothers of Mary. Not so well known in the East, the home of The Commonweal, the Brothers of Mary claim thousands of acquaintances and friends in the Middle-West, the Pacific coast, Canada, the Hawaiian Islands, and Japan.

Coming into this country in 1849 at the invitation of Father Wenninger, a Jesuit missionary stationed at Saint Xavier College, Cincinnati, the pioneer Marianists secured property in Dayton, Ohio, from Mr. John Stuart, a descendant of the royal family of the Stuarts. This marked the inception of their educational successes in the United States amid pioneer hardships, and there developed the present Dayton University, an institution that ranks with the greatest Catholic institutions in the country. From this centre, the organization spread with impressive rapidity and kept pace with the extraordinary growth of the Middle-West. In all the important cities of the Mississippi and Ohio valleys, we find institutions of merit conducted by the Brothers: Elder High in Cincinnati; Cathedral Latin High in Cleveland; McBride High in St. Louis; Chaminade College in St. Louis; Saint Mary's College in San Antonio, to name a few of them.

In 1884, the Marianists sent out their first missionaries and have since continued to do so. The Hawaiian Islands were foreign soil at that time, and Saint Louis College, Honolulu, is the result of their efforts. There are many amusing stories told of the friendship that existed between King Kalakana and the Brothers, and the monarch was a frequent visitor at the college, delighting especially in the performance of the college orchestra and band. Among the alumni of Saint Louis College is one of the representatives of the islands in Congress, and the present building program sponsored by the alumni is a series of edifices to be erected overlooking the sea, a group that will be the first sight of the islands for the incoming tourist.

The Japanese missions flourished likewise from the beginning. Assisting their European confrères financially and with members, the American provinces of the Marianists figure conspicuously in several outstanding educational institutions, and so effective has been their work in spreading culture and science that the French Chamber recently voted them 50,000 francs to rebuild their institutions wrecked by the late Japanese earthquake disaster.

At home and abroad the Marianists are known. Carrying out the same policies as their co-workers in education, a pioneering spirit nevertheless predominates. They came to the Middle-West when the cities were towns and the towns were villages. We find them in Texas in 1852, and in Winnipeg, Canada, in 1880; in 1884 they penetrated into the semi-barbarous Hawaiian Islands; in 1885 they founded establishments on the Pacific coast, and in the same year they came to Japan. They figured prominently in the central Catholic high-school proposition that so forcibly injected itself in the educational problems of ten years ago; and when ecclesiastical authority bids for their service, we find them eager to accommodate.

URBAN KOO.

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PLAYS AND PLAYWRIGHTS

By R. DANA SKINNER

(This is the second of three general review articles by Mr. Skinner on the 1926-27 theatre season.—The Editors.)

ANOTHER American playwright who has leaped into prominence due to the rousing welcome accorded his first produced play, The Second Man, is S. N. Behrman. This was a Theatre Guild production, and had all the advantage of the amazingly fine cast which that organization supplied. Even allowing for this important fact, there seems to be little doubt that Mr. Behrman is one of the most adept writers of dialogue among the native playwrights. His play is really that thing dreaded by all theatrical producers (who imagine they know the public requirements)—a talky-talky play. It happens, however, that the quality of the talk is so briskly entertaining, the feeling for character so acute and the acid of the author's words so well mixed with charity and understanding, that The Second Man carries one forward with quite as much sweep as the ordinary drama of outward action. Mr. Behrman realizes that if you can only interest people sufficiently in the characters of a play, audiences are glad to watch their fortunes for two hours, even if no murders or big emotional scenes emerge. Another Behrman play—Love Is Like That—was far less successful and deserved success far less. It retained only his nimble quality of dialogue and lacked the discernment which pervaded The Second Man. Incidentally, this second play was a collaboration with the author of The Barker—so let the arrows fall where they may.

Speaking of The Barker—Kenyon Nicholson chose the roving tent life of a near-circus as the locale of some otherwise old-fashioned happenings. I am not saying "old-fashioned" captiously. The few important themes of the stage can hardly hope to be dated and modern except in dress, language and the current fashion of the theatre. My objection is not in the least to the general story Mr. Nicholson has chosen but rather to the critics themselves who have tried to see it as amazingly new simply because the dress is new. The chief defect of The Barker is its attempt to gain theatrical effect through the overdone modern method of profanity and uselessly vulgar speech. There is no real art in prostituting words for sensational effect. There is still less semblance of art in misusing the name of God to draw a crowd.

Robert Sherwood, the editor of Life, is another good man "gone playwright." The Road to Rome has been busily ringing the cash register for some months, having started off with the violent approval of every sophisticated critic in New York. One of the dictionaries defines "sophisticated" as "artificially or pretentiously wise." Well—The Road to Rome is both. Its satire makes great pretense of wisdom without having much. And the pall of artificiality lies heavily over all because of the Shavian attempt to disguise modern satire in ancient dress. The play is a speciously clever bit of work which, stripped to its bones, simply preaches that the bored young wife of a pompous old man may seek her amorous pleasures wherever the wind bloweth her. Plays of this sort are far more immoral—in the sense of deliberately beclouding moral standards—than all the so-called "raw meat" dramas and tragedies which generally attract police intervention.

Another play distinctly in the same class (the critics like to call it "civilized") is The Constant Wife. In it the heroine, discovering that her husband is unfaithful, demonstrates her "civilized" instinct by deciding to be temporarily and openly unfaithful in return. This, we are told, is a triumph of the modern point of view as against the old-fashioned hysteria in which heavily wronged stage-wives once indulged! Comment is hardly necessary—except to express a certain wonder that Ethel Barrymore should lend her personal charm and distinction as a comedienne to the task of creating public sympathy for the theme of the play. The play is the work of Somerset Maugham.

Francis Edwards Faragoh is still another American to make his effective playwriting début this past season. Pinwheel—staged by the Neighborhood Playhouse with highly modern settings—was his most important contribution. Aside from a vivid descriptive sense and an ear that obviously reports dialogue correctly, it cannot be said that he showed in this play any arresting promise of distinction. An essential immaturity of feeling and judgment pervaded it. He is more interested in environmental forces than in the people they affect—more interested in emotions than in character.

Among the plays still running, one notices, in addition to The Constant Wife, The Road to Rome, The Second Man and others mentioned, one or two curious survivals. Of these not the least curious is The Squall, by Jean Bart. Pretty generally battered by the critics, it has managed to drag on week after week with the aid of the cut-rate agencies, and without that avowed and unlimited backing which has kept The Ladder forever alive. One might summarize The Squall by saying that it works out a good intention in a vulgar way—that is, it takes the moral storm created in a peaceful Spanish household by the arrival of a fascinating gypsy, and goes through the motions of a morality play without neglecting any opportunity to disclose the precise nature of the gypsy's amorous activities. At times the effect becomes laughable. It is one of the few cases I have seen of synthetic success in the theatre—that is, if you call long life with a pulmotor real box-office success.

Crime is a well-staged and effective melodrama—reviewed so recently in these pages that further summary is needless; an excellent example of hokum gladly accepted for its entertainment value, and in spite of its sentimentally false values. Her Cardboard Lover is, I think, a case of acting rather than playwriting success. The usual indelicacy of French farce is carried up to a certain point and then aerated for American consumption. The result is a poor play that titillates on the edge of vulgarity and draws the "pretentiously wise" crowd. And before we close the chapter, it is worth remembering that Howard Lindsay and Bertrand Robinson have done a most unusual thing—they have written a play which the sophisticated critics like, which the homely every-day audiences cherish, and to which no one could possibly object. A rare feat. And the name of this play—please note—is Tommy.

Next week—the stage being a most human institution—we shall take a look at the actors and actresses of the past season. Amazing talent is constantly emerging, and much of it has been wasted on poor shows or through incompetent direction and faulty casting. But there has seldom been a time when the personalities of the stage showed more vivid promise.

The title page and index for Volume V of The Commonweal are now ready. These will be sent upon request. Arrangements have been made for binding Volume V in leather or cloth. Information on binding will be given upon application to the offices of The Commonweal.

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BOOKS

La Vie de Disraeli, by André Maurois. Paris: Librairie Gallimard.

IT WOULD not be altogether unfair to call it the scenario method—this present-day method of writing biography, presenting the hero instead of interpreting him, substituting close-ups for analysis, and brilliant stage-pictures for a patient account of his character and influence. The fashion is now international. Lytton Strachey began it in England with his Eminent Victorians; Herr Ludwig carried it on with his more weighty portrayals of Bismarck, Napoleon and the German kaiser. And for some months past, in France, a whole collection has been appearing, volume by volume, in which this or that great man is paraded before your eyes, lit up by the arc-lamps of a hundred epigrams. Guy de Pourtalès's Franz Liszt was a particularly vivid affair; the same writer's Chopin, just published, was equally bright; and there have been, to single out the more pronounced successes, M. Jacques Sindral's Talleyrand and M. Jean Prévost's Montaigne. Clearly the French have a genius for this kind of writing; the blood of Sainte-Beuve is not in their veins for nothing.

Before the series to which I have just referred was started, M. André Maurois, justly accounted one of the chief foreign interpreters of Englishmen to themselves, had given, in Ariel, ou la Vie de Shelley, a remarkably brilliant picture of Shelley the man; of Shelley the writer and thinker there was, to be frank, just as little as could possibly be given. Now, from the same pen, we have La Vie de Disraeli, as congenial a second choice as could possibly have been found, and a subject moreover which, if properly illuminated and well understood, is capable of letting light into many dark corners of our social and political life today. M. Maurois has not taken the task too easily. The limelight has been used dexterously; there is evidence of this on almost every page—the close-up, for example, of "Dizzy's" Cambridge friend, Lord John Manners, "A Lancelot wandering in a word of machines," or the long-sustained succession of flashes in which the figures of Beaconsfield and Gladstone are shown in all their outward, and to a certain extent, their inward contrast. But M. Maurois is far from being only a scenario-writer. The limelight is turned to deeper things; it is, if one may say so, made to penetrate Disraeli's mind and shine on pages from his novels and his wonderfully self-revealing letters, so that at the end, while the man stands forth in our vision, his significance is also imprinted on our imagination and our understanding.

The very title of the third chapter is a good example of this; it is called Beau Brummell and Saint Ignatius, and it brings out, more vividly and concisely than any full-length biography, the place which was filled in the mind of this dandy-politician by his early reading of the Jesuit saint and his constant admiration of the order Saint Ignatius founded. Later, with that brilliance of perception that perhaps came from his race—"he was," says M. Maurois, "particularly Oriental in desiring the good things of this life while all the time perceiving their worthlessness"—he was to defend tradition, and it is not generally realized that his famous epigram, "My lords, I am on the side of the angels," formed part of a defense of Christian dogma, the maintenance of which he considered a necessity both for personal peace of mind and for the stability of the state. To this, it is true, he added a firm belief in the state church of England as by law established, but his testimony to the social and political value of a fixed creed sounds strangely

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applicable to our own day, to which, in England at least, Lothair still has a message—if not quite the same one as Disraeli intended.

These aspects of Disraeli's life and character are singled out because they are too much neglected in the popular picture. Not that the forerunner of Tory democracy, the parliamentary slayer of Peel, the first imperialist, the political orator (after the first familiar failure) the purchaser of the Suez Canal shares, the intimate friend and counsellor of Queen Victoria, and the affectionate husband—not that these are passed over. But they, after all, can be found in other lives of Disraeli. It is a more complete man we find in these swiftly-moving scenes, which have the great merit of driving the reader to a deeper, first-hand study.

JOHN STAPLETON.

The Spirit of Bohemia, by Vladimir Nosek. New York: Brentano's. $3.50.

THE author's Survey of Czecho-Slovak History, Music and Literature, with its avowed object of affording an insight into Czecho-Slovakia's culture, character, mentality and spiritual achievements, has been quite legitimately written with the premise that "the only way toward a better understanding among nations is a better knowledge of each other." In pursuance of this ideal, The Spirit of Bohemia is divided into two halves—part one dealing with Bohemian history and part two with Bohemian literature and music. But lack of the historic sense which leads to misrepresentations of historic values has never made for "a better understanding among nations." Mr. Nosek's second section offers a "sketch," to use the author's own word, which, qualified by a quite comprehensible overinsistence on Czech nationalist merits, adequately covers the general achievement of Czech culture and the moral influence of its arts on Czech national development. But even here, the author's presentation is affected by a sectarian point of view, which inevitably tends to destroy the value of his conclusions.

Probably the only section of The Spirit of Bohemia which is free from this defect is that which deals with Czech music. As regards the rest, while one must admit that absolute impersonality on the historian's part is a practical impossibility, the personal viewpoint should not obtrude to the extent of justifying Voltaire's cynical dictum that all historical writing is merely "playing tricks with the dead"—or the living, for that matter.

Thus throughout Mr. Nosek's volume we find such grotesque phrases as "the chivalrous spirit" of Lutheranism; "John Huss . . . the Zoroaster or Mohammed of the Czechs"; the "moral strength" of the bloodthirsty Zizka. In fact, the author's Bohemian history is quite frankly and zealously anti-Catholic, and paints the historic scene, not as it is, but as he would have it appear in his readers' eyes. When we reach the beginning of the struggle for Czech political autonomy and the activities of the historian Palacky and of Havlicek, Mazzini's pupil, we find an exposition as detailed as unconvincing of the former's paradoxical theories to the effect that "Catholicism has despoiled Christianity, which in itself is sufficient for humanity at all stages of civilization, through insisting more on dogmas than on the morality of life." The author's partisan treatment of his entire theme, moreover, conveys the impression (and his political conclusions are largely religiously based) that Bohemia is made up, in a confessional sense, mainly of Bohemian Brethren and "Czecho-Slovak Church" schismatics—and this in a land more than 95 percent of whose inhabitants are members of the Roman Catholic Church. From the pages it devotes to music and (with qualifications) from those given to literature, one may draw information. With regard to its Historical Aspects, the author has vitiated The Spirit of Bohemia with too much of the spirit of his own narrow religious particularism to justify commendation.

FREDERICK H. MARTENS.

Messages, by Ramon Fernandez; translated by Montgomery Belgion. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.00.

MR. BELGION says, in his introduction to this unusual series of critical essays, that M. Fernandez's lineal literary ancestor is Coleridge. One may reasonably feel slightly dubious about this claim, but the book does bear some relation to Biographia Litteraria and its companion volumes. Like them it strives to explore certain of the larger personalities who have expressed themselves in European letters by the light of philosophic principle. Of course, everything hinges upon the query, "What philosophy?" M. Fernandez, who seems to lean in the general direction of Paul Valery's intellectual discipline, is first of all a Bergsonian. This is not the simplest and least technical of philosophic attitudes, and so the reader who is not familiar with it, at least to some extent, will find Messages a trifle baffling. An introductory essay, Of Philosophic Criticism, does something to remove the handicap. By it we are informed that "modern philosophy is like a sort of transparent gauze, subtle, shapeless, revealing itself as it reveals and modeling itself as it models the spontaneous products of the human mind." Applied to criticism, it is interested in picking up and following the "spiritual dynamism" which books reveal and then situating "them in the human universe." The basic definition arrived at by M. Fernandez is, therefore, this: "Aesthetics must be an imaginative ontology."

I am sure that I have made nothing clear; but I have tried faithfully to state the author's point of departure. It deserves to be tested, not by what it is worth in itself, but by the newness of the vision which it brings to the contemplation of literature. And one admits freely that certain points it makes are impressive and fresh—that now and then the old scene is brightened through a quick and jagged flash of insight. For instance, there is an examination of Balzac's method of character-drawing which calls attention to the unfortunate fact that people who move through the Comédie Humaine tend gradually to become types or even ideas. There is some good criticism of Proust, particularly as regards his famous theory of "intermittencies." But the most engrossing part of the book is the almost lyric interpretation of Meredith, who is seen as "condemning and surpassing romanticism." Readers who have felt the nearness of Meredith to Bergson, and who have sensed as well the difficulty involved in comparing the onward movement of Diana of the Crossways with the ordinary dramatic progress of standard fiction, will read M. Fernandez's treatment with considerable profit and relish.

Elsewhere our author is not so successful. His discussion of Cardinal Newman is very clever, but like the Abbé Brémond's book, it seems to ignore the purpose for which the Grammar of Assent was written at the risk of making the book more autobiographical than Newman intended it should be. All such matters, however, involve subtle philosophic points of view. These it was M. Fernandez's desire to set forth in his book. It may seem ungrateful and caviling to suggest, therefore, that what is really valuable in what he has to say (and much is

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valuable) apparently depends less upon his philosophic assumptions than upon his real critical acumen. But the fact is he courts the risk of appearing to be a pamphleteer for an ideology when he is really a remarkably perceptive young man. Why should criticism choke its utterance with an almost fantastic jargon? M. Fernandez reproaches Mr. Eliot's poem "with having too great an autonomy of the aesthetic synthesis." This, a fair example of his method of expression, leads one to wonder if Gaul be not divided into far more parts than Caesar knew.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Brother John: A Tale of the First Franciscans, by Vida D. Scudder. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

MISS SCUDDER has written an ideal book for summer reading; it is full of golden days, Umbrian landscapes and warm sunshine, mixed with just enough history and serious thought to relieve the more conscientious of any sense of guilt in devoting a few hours to it. The story concerns an English Franciscan, Brother John of Sanfort, and carries him through the turbulent years just after the death of Saint Francis, when the Spirituals, or Zealots, of whom he is one, opposed the more practical wisdom of the Church and suffered to keep pure what they considered the true rule of their order. Altogether the work is excellently done; the action moves swiftly; the characters stand forth well, if a little too boldly. This description of Pope Gregory offers a good sample of Miss Scudder's manner:

"Old, old—surely coaeval with those ruined columns which stood in the Campo Vaccino and always stung John to reverence as he passed by. So old, so wise, so weary, Pope Gregory! Unbowed by the weight of well-nigh a hundred years, he bore himself stately as those columns and with fewer signs of decay. Very tall, alert, clear-eyed, he dominated Christendom as the column dominated all left of ancient Rome; his was rather the dignity than the pathos of age. The firm skin of his face showed an infinitude of minute lines, cryptic register of past experience. The history of the Church militant for ages past seemed written there. Through his pallor shone an almost physical light, not emanating, curiously enough, from his eyes so much as from his entire countenance. That a face could be so worldly-wise yet so illumined!"

Most surprisingly one finds throughout the book a real feeling for the difficulty, the discipline, inherent in the Franciscan way of life. "Have you observed, my son, how wondrous are the ways of love?" asks Brother Rufino. Then he adds—wondrous "in that it always demands what is most foreign to nature, and most offensive to the natural man." This is surely not that sentimental Franciscanism so common among modern admirers of the great saint. With all of this Miss Scudder couples a truly understanding attitude toward the men of the middle way, whose policies finally succeeded in the order, and whose chief exponent, Bonaventure, ends by having Brother John clapped into prison, there to end his days.

What chiefly mars the book and, in fact, makes it significant mainly for summer reading, is Miss Scudder's style, which tends at times to oversweetness. "Brother John's face shone of a sudden." "The sun shone a white pearl. The town itself lay like a dimmer pearl upon its hill." "He [John of Sanfort] felt the rhythm of his breath and blood one with the rhythm of all growing things, nay, with the ordered dancing of the stars." Miss Scudder's sympathies, too, although she does not lavish them, are rather Tennysonian, in a way which one feels must be alien to the time of which she writes. Every-

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thing looks forward to that happy day, the age of the spirit, when all men shall be united in a great brotherly love. This is a little too sunshiny, a little too much like Locksley Hall, to be tied to the thirteenth century.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

Kit O'Brien, by Edgar Lee Masters. New York: Boni and Liveright. $2.50.

EDGAR LEE MASTERS has again happily employed the jargon of the Petersburg, Illinois, locality in this tale which he allows Kit O'Brien to tell. While not particularly picturesque, it is an easy dialect to follow, and very effective in creating the images of the characters that people the book. Masters is loyal to that righteous community of his, and its types are kindly dealt with. The tales of these people that come through him abound in sympathy and humor, though prose is not the medium of the creator of the Spoon River Anthology.

Kit's honest recital wins one's affections in the early pages, and thereafter for some time one delightedly follows his exciting career. The flight from Petersburg and the dreaded reformatory to a houseboat near St. Louis and the involuntary adoption of the rôle of champion to the unhappy Miss Siddons attracts and thrills one. However, the more vivid interest wanes after their return home, and the incidents that follow might have been hastened to the happy conclusion without any definite sense of loss on my part.

Each character in the story lives, but George Montgomery and Miss Siddons are portrayed with amazing deftness. One's feelings of compassion cannot fail to be stirred by the tragedy of the once beautiful actress, and one wishes to hear more of her. All in all, there is a pleasant time to be spent with Kit O'Brien, and for those that yearn for beautifully written narrative and gentle reading I recommend this book.

CLARE P. WALTHEW.

Ludwig van Beethoven's Pianoforte Sonatas, by William Behrend; translated from the Danish by Ingeborg Lund, with an introduction by Alfred Cortot. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

ANY book that sheds new light on Beethoven or his music is eagerly welcomed by all true lovers of the master. And when the book is so deserving of a place of honor as William Behrend's Pianoforte Sonatas, it is sure of finding an appreciative and sympathetic audience.

Mr. Behrend sets out to discover Beethoven the man as revealed in his piano sonatas. We can but agree with the author when he says that the piano was ever the instrument with which Beethoven was most intimate. To it he confided all his secrets from his "infant prodigy" days to almost the very end of his life. In the sonatas we follow him through the vicissitudes of forty years, from the time he was twelve until he was fifty-two. Through this form of music he voiced his distaste for the conditions of his home life; his gay career in Vienna during the years when he was fêted and petted as a brilliant virtuoso, his bitterness at being thus misunderstood and underrated; his deep despondency when he learned he was going to be totally deaf; his stormy moods and intense desire for solitude in later life; his terrible loneliness, and finally his frantic, grief-stricken prayer for peace.

Mr. Behrend cannot be said to have contributed anything material toward the study of the technique of Beethoven, nor has he brought to light any new facts concerning his life. Obviously it was not his intention to do anything of the sort. It would, of course, be impossible to read through some of Beethoven's sonatas without marveling at his genius in making notes do astonishing things, but the author is more interested in what those notes are saying, and what the sonata is expressing. For this reason, because he has made Beethoven's personality come vividly to life, this book will be interesting and helpful to those who are trying to give an intelligent interpretation of the spirit of Beethoven rather than to gain laurels by a brilliant performance. This does not mean that the book is merely designed for students of Beethoven's sonatas; it is written in an interesting manner and is no more technical than the average concert program notes.

DORIS CUNNINGHAM.

Romanticism, by Lascelles Abercrombie. New York: The Viking Press. $2.00.

AFTER Professor Babbitt had hurled his formidable volumes at the head of the monster Romanticism, it seemed for a time as if its friends and defenders would hardly dare sally forth. Now the most lucid and tranquil of Scottish poet-professors, Lascelles Abercrombie, gives us a book in which there is no mention of Babbitt and hardly any reference to Rousseau. This difference is, perhaps, to be accounted for by the fact that the present treatise avoids continental "Romanticism" and seeks to photograph an attitude in English letters with the aid of light supplied by the Greeks. The formula at which Mr. Abercrombie arrives is this: the contrast really lies between romantic and realistic; the second of these is based on an acceptance of the "actualities of life"; and the first is the result of a turning inward which may assume either of two forms—"relying on inner experience, one may desire to withdraw from the actualities of life; relying on inner experience, one may desire to improve the actualities of life." Blake and Shelley are therefore two dominant romantic types. Wordsworth, judged from this point of view (no doubt to Professor Babbitt's astonishment) is not romantic at all.

Very likely the most suggestive portion of the book is an analysis of Empedocles as a romantic. One suspects, however, that this investigation ought to have led to some consideration of Hindu mysticism, from which Empedocles doubtless derived. But this is only one of many suggestive points of view which this new book opens up. It should be read by all who are interested in the vast, complex problem it discusses. Those who know Mr. Abercrombie's previous books need not be reminded that his manner of presentation is both clear and poetic.

T. C.

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THE QUIET CORNER

"I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library."—C. LAMB.

Struggling through a crowd of wedding guests at the door of a church which is known by the strange title of fashionable, we realized that we were in the company of significant persons. In the throng we sensed an apparent attempt on the part of almost everybody to look as though they were emancipated from the necessities that ruled the crowd. Mrs. Smith's ear-rings were longer than usual; Miss Jones's skirt was more coryphée than ever; John Brown's cravat was richer and louder; Henry James's check trousers more geometrical. The consciousness of their aim to be significant, so sadly belied in their every-day habits of gregarious herdings of pleasure and sport, and defeated in a group where everybody is somebody and nobody anybody, reproduces the sad futility of the average social life of our day. There is no precedence among smart folk, no regulated rank however artificial, to ease the deadly game of assuming a significance if you have it or not. Henry Chester Tracy, in his Towards the Open, may help some of our bewildered aspirants in their efforts toward significance, where he lays down the actual requirements for this quality:

"Ability to discover real meanings and not to be deceived by words; for this means emancipation from mob reactions to symbols and sounds: alert interest in a wide diversity of natural phenomena and the life of things; for this means emancipation from fixed ideas, vices, inferior ends: acute sense of the need of leisure, privacy, and space; for this means emancipation from the determinism symbolized by steel, concrete, and brick—the determinism of an industrial state."

In other parlance, to retire at times from fashionable crushes, to eat luncheons in uncrowded restaurants, to attend plays that are not over-crowded; to read books that are not best-sellers; to walk on streets that are not too smart; to wear hats and clothing that are without the ruling hatbands and coutouriers' marks; to drive through unfrequented country; stray through the cemeteries now and then; pray before lonely altars; and converse with simple people who are not too paradoxically clever. A sweet little old lady in her black lace and white fichu is far more significant than any blooming madame, tinted, bobbed, with cabachon jewelry and silver heels: we look at the sweet little old lady first—but then, perhaps, we are only significant ourselves?

❦ ❦ ❦

"Somebody should prepare a book on the sons and daughters of the greater poets, their history and resistance to the fates and temperaments thrust upon them by their famous parent." Doctor Angelicus was clearly in ruminative mood, after a return from a shore-dinner party held on a roof garden during the week-end. "The report of the recent demise of Paul Verlaine's son brings curious questions to those not unaware of his sensitive and eccentric character. It seems that Verlaine fils grew up to become an official in the metropolitan traction service in Paris; remained a modest and self-effacing employee and died in a happy obscurity. What will some of our poets, so ardent for their copyrights and the lucre of their hire to Euphrosyne, think of this son of the great symbolist, when they learn that he never even inquired for the royalties on his father's writings and left them unclaimed and untouched in the publishers' cash box? Verily, Paul Verlaine was a great poet, and his son must have been another—although without royalties—for it is the crown that makes the king, not the rubber heels."

Britannicus, who was waving a palmetto fan, every gust

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of which was an implied slur upon the summer climate of Manhattan, interrupted here in a weary voice, saying:

"This young Frenchman can hardly be confused with my old schoolmate, Ralph Roughead, an excellent young industrial at Selfridge's about whom we used to lilt:

'An able accountant Ralph Roughead
Earns fifteen a week when emploughead;
But his Christmas gift-giving
And the high tax on living
Keep him down where his bankbook's a voughead.'"

"These British limericks are warranted to cause a civil war within our library, my dear Britannicus. 'Pray you avoid it'—the weather permitting and the Geneva conference still in sitting." Doctor Angelicus spoke in an impressive diplomatic tone.

"Listen Angelicus, here is another that will appeal to your sense of the mystical:

'In the circle of Ermyntrude Elwes,
These things are referred to as spelwes.
Where the dream stuff is sold
They know silence is gold—
And a doctor, of course, never telwes.'"

"Have I told you of my recent experience at Barnaby Dobbin Snope's studio? He invited me to supper and appeared at the door clad in a long brown habit; the night was warm but he had the hood pulled down over his fat bald head, and he said funereally as he led me to a most luxurious couch, 'This is my Franciscan night, Angelicus. I always devote Wednesday evenings to Saint Francis.'

"I looked around and beheld long lean plaster casts of the poor Saint of Assisi; the arms of the Franciscan Order were embroidered over the fireplace, and on the table, around a large box of chocolate creams, into which he frequently dipped his plump white hand, were the books of Sabatier, Evelyn Underhill, Henry Dwight Sedgwick and Harold Goad. There were photographs and engravings of ecstatic poses of Saint Clare and Saint Teresa, and a general jumble of Spanish angels, altar lamps and copies of Ribera and El Greco in the background.

"'I love these Franciscan poverties and simplicities,' he said to me in his soft and beautiful voice, as he sank back into his cushions, revealing that he wore a very fine pair of monastic sandals over his flesh-colored silk stockings, 'and as members of our branch of the Third Order'—here he gave his white girdle cord a rather vicious tug, 'we hope to draw some of the leading people of our set away from the crowded confusions of modern life. The effect upon our household decorations, the proper barenesses and static horizontals will bring back our lives to a sense of seriousness and the claims of the spirit.'

"'Please, pass the chocolates again, my dear Barnaby,' I asked him; 'I have struck one that has a hard nut in it and you know my horror of the dentist.'

"'Pain! Ah, the beautiful mistress of the soul—the penance of our nature that lifts and purifies us—take one of those square chocolates, they hold sugared apricots—and pass the box back.'

"The evening proved delightful—I could only thank the Third Order for a novel form of entertainment. I am sure my friend Barnaby retired to his tufted little cell with the same unction as I landed upon my old army cot, which I shall refuse to abandon even when they house me in the marble halls of my dreams."

—THE LIBRARIAN.

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